

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JAKART 09692 090150Z

10

ACTION A-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 EA-06 ISO-00 H-03 SS-07 NSC-06 /032 W

----- 008440

R 090038Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9617

AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 9692

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PT, ID, AS, OREP (MANSFIELD MIKE)

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE TIMOR: BRIEFING MATERIAL FOR SEN. MANSFIELD

REF: STATE 187310 (NOTAL)

1. THIS CABLE PROVIDES BRIEFING MATERIAL ON PORTUGUESE
TIMOR REQUESTED IN REFTEL FOR SEN. MANSFIELD.

2. BASIC DATA. POPULATION OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR IS
600,000, MOST OF WHOM LIVE BY SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURE
IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INTERIOR OF ISLAND. COLONIAL
ADMINISTRATION IS HEADED BY GOVERNOR WHO IS ARMY MAJOR
AND INCLUDES 600 PORTUGUESE TROOPS AND 2,000 TIMORESE
SOLDIERS. CHINESE, WHO DOMINATE LOCAL COMMERCE, NUMBER
14,000, HALF OF WHOM HOLD TAIWANESE PASSPORTS.

3. PORTUGUESE TIMOR HAS LARGE ANNUAL TRADE DEFICIT (1974
EXPORTS WERE \$5.5 MILLION AND IMPORTS \$12.5 MILLION) AND
MUST IMPORT MANY BASIC FOODSTUFFS INCLUDING RICE.
COFFEE, COPRA, AND TIMBER ARE MAIN EXPORTS. ANNUAL PER
CAPITA INCOME IS ABOUT \$120, STANDARDS OF HEALTH AND
EDUCATION ARE LOW, AND ROADS AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURES ARE
LARGELY LACKING. COLONY PRESENTLY SUBSISTS ON \$20 MILLION
ANNUAL SUBSIDY FROM GOP AND WERE IT TO BECOME INDEPENDENT,
WOULD BE HARD PUT TO MAINTAIN ITSELF UNLESS SUBSTANTIAL GRANT
FOREIGN AID FORTHCOMING.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 JAKART 09692 090150Z

4. INTERNAL SITUATION. FOLLOWING PORTUGUESE MILITARY

REGIME'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO CARRY OUT DECOLONIZATION, THREE PARTIES WERE FORMED IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR IN 1974. FRETILIN, WHICH SUPPORTS FULL INDEPENDENCE, AND TIMOR DEMOCRATIC UNION (UDT), WHICH ORIGINALLY FAVORED CONTINUED ASSOCIATION WITH PORTUGAL BUT NOW ALSO ADVOCATES INDEPENDENCE, ARE BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT; AND ESTIMATES DIFFER AS TO WHICH HAS LARGEST NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS. APODETI, A PARTY FAVORING INTEGRATION WITH INDONESIA, IS GENERALLY CONCEDED TO BE RUNNING A VERY POOR THIRD. AN UNKNOWN FACTOR OF POTENTIAL IMPORTANCE ARE TIMORESE SOLDIERY, WHO OCCUPY A PRIVILEGED POSITION UNDER COLONIAL REGIME BUT DO NOT AS YET SEEM TO HAVE INVOLVED THEMSELVES MUCH IN AFFAIRS OF POLITICAL PARTIES.

5. AT A CONFERENCE HELD IN MACAO IN JUNE 1975 BETWEEN PORTUGUESE OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF TIMORESE PARTIES (EXCEPT FRETILIN, WHICH DECIDED AT THE LAST MOMENT NOT TO ATTEND), PLAN WAS PREPARED FOR ENDING PORTUGUESE ADMINISTRATION BY OCTOBER 1978. THIS WOULD INVOLVE SERIES OF LOCAL ELECTIONS (ALREADY BEGUN) LEADING TO FORMATION OF CONSULTATIVE BODY. IN 1976, GENERAL ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, WHICH WOULD DECIDE TERRITORY'S FUTURE.

6. EXTERNAL RELATIONS. SINCE WESTERN HALF OF TIMOR IS PART OF INDONESIA, GOI DIRECTLY INTERESTED IN FATE OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR. GOI SPOKESMEN HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT INDEPENDENT TIMOR WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY UNVIALE, POLITICALLY UNSTABLE, AND OPEN TO COMMUNIST CHINESE INFLUENCE THROUGH LOCAL CHINESE POPULATION. (JAKARTA ALSO WORRIED THAT PRIOR TO DECOLONIZATION RADICAL ELEMENTS IN LISBON MAY ABET COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN TIMOR.) GOI HAS ANNOUNCED IT WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT TIMOR AS PART INDONESIA, WHILE AT SAME TIME STATING IT IS PREPARED TO RESPECT WISHES OF COLONY'S POPULATION. HOWEVER, INTEGRATION IS CLEARLY JAKARTA'S OBJECTIVE. GOI IS TRYING TO ACHIEVE THIS BY PERSUADING POPULACE OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR OF ADVANTAGES OF INTEGRATION AND BY OBTAINING THE COOPERATION OF PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES AND DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT OF AUSTRALIA. HOWEVER, IF PEACEFUL MEANS DO NOT APPEAR TO BE MAKING HEADWAY DURING NEXT THREE YEARS, POSSIBILITY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 JAKARTA 09692 090150Z

REMAINS OF INDONESIAN RESORT TO FORCE, THOUGH THIS DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY IN NEAR TERM.

7. INDONESIAN HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT CONCERTED CAMPAIGN TO WOO PORTUGUESE TIMORESE, THROUGH VISITS OF INDONESIAN DELEGATIONS TO TIMOR AND TRIPS TO JAKARTA FOR TIMORESELEADERS. THEY HAVE ALSO MAINTAINED CLOSE TOUCH WITH PORTUGUESE, WITH WHOM DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS REOPENED AFTER

GAP OF TEN YEARS, AND WITH AUSTRALIANS, WHO FAVOR INTEGRATION WITH INDONESIA BUT HAVE BEEN USING THEIR INFLUENCE TO URGE THE GOI NOT TO RESORT TO FORCE.

8. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE INDICATION THAT SOVIETS OR PRC TAKING MUCH INTEREST IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR. RECENT VISIT OF UDT LEADER TO TAIWAN TO SEEK ECONOMIC AID SUGGESTS LOCAL CHINESE POPULATION CONTINUES TO LEAN TOWARD ROC.

9. PROSPECTS. SEVERAL FACTORS APPEAR AS POSSIBLE STUMBLING BLOCKS TO PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY TERMINATION OF PORTUGUESE RULE IN TIMOR. GENERAL LACK OF EDUCATION AND POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION AMONG POPULACE ARE LIKELY TO BE CONTINUING SOURCE OF BICKERING AMONG LOCAL POLITICAL GROUPS AND WILL INHIBIT DEVELOPMENT OF CONSENSUS ON SHAPE OF FUTURE REGIME. ALTHOUGH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN DILI SEEMS SINCERELY DEDICATED TO ALLOWING TIMORESE TO MAKE THEIR CHOICE IN PEACEFUL CONDITIONS, UNCERTAIN POLITICAL SITUATION IN LISBON MAKES PROBLEMATIC WHETHER GOP WILL HAVE MEANS AND WILL TO STAY THE COURSE AND TO HOLD TO PRESENT PLAN OF ALLOWING THREE YEARS TO ARRANGE TRANSITION. WITH MAJORITY SENTIMENT AMONG SMALL POLITICAL ELITE IN PORTUGRHRV TIMOR AT PRESENT INCLINED TOWARD INDEPENDENCE, POTENTIAL CLASH LOOMS WITH INTEGRATIONIST AIMS OF INDONESIA UNLESS GOI IS ABLE TO MAKE MORE PROGRESS THAN HERETOFORE IN WINNING SUPPORT OF POPULACE. U.S. POSITION IS THAT WHILE WE WELCOME DECOLONIZATION OF FORMER PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES, WE ARE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR AND WILL ACCEPT ANY OUTCOME AGREED UPON BY PARTIES CONCERNED AND BY PEOPLE OF TERRITORY.
NEWSOM

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975JAKART09692
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750275-0601
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750866/aaaacggj.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION A
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 187310
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 JUN 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <17 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PORTUGUESE TIMOR: BRIEFING MATERIAL FOR SEN. MANSFIELD
TAGS: PFOR, OREP, PT, ID, AS, (MANSFIELD, MIKE)
To: HONG KONG
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006